

New Study Reveals Toxins, Carcinogens and Allergens Hidden in Products Used Around Our Homes

Washington, DC – On Thursday, Rep. Steve Israel (D – NY) announced the introduction of the Cleaning Product Right-to-Know Act, legislation that will require ingredient labeling for domestic, commercial and institutional cleaning products.



“Our cabinets are full of soaps and cleaners that we assume improve our homes and health. However, new research shines a light on the secret chemicals that might be doing more harm than good. You have a right to know what’s hiding in your household products. That’s why I’m introducing legislation to require full disclosure of the ingredients in everyday cleaning products,” said Rep. Israel.

“Congressman Israel has led the way with an extremely important piece of legislation, the Cleaning Product Right-to-Know Act. As we work to reduce our risk of diseases like breast cancer, it’s critical to know which products are safe to choose for our families,” said Karen Joy Miller, founder and president of the Huntington Breast Cancer Action Coalition.

A new study of everyday cleaning products published today by Women’s Voices for the Earth found the following:

- Some products contained reproductive toxins such as toluene and phthalates, carcinogens such as 1,4-dioxane and chloroform, and a hormone disrupting synthetic musk.
- Several known allergens were also detected in these products, the highest levels of which appeared in fragranced air fresheners.
- Allergens were found in products marketed as fragrance-free.
- None of these chemicals were listed on the product’s label.

Source: Dirty Secrets: What’s Hiding in Your Cleaning Products, Alexandra Scranton, Women’s

Voices for the Earth, November 2011

In 2009, an Environmental Working Group study of cleaning products used in schools found 450 distinct toxic contaminants in those products, some linked to an increased risk of asthma and cancer.

"Increased awareness of chemicals in our environment have led many to take responsible steps to avoid unnecessary exposure. Unfortunately, many families still remain unaware of the presence, and consequentially, the dangers of harmful chemicals that lurk in common products around their homes. Ignorance is not bliss and what the public doesn't know, can hurt them especially when those threats include cancer and respiratory ailment. A new study in Suffolk County identifies toxics from house hold products as a growing pollution source to our drinking water supplies. The public needs clear information to make good choices when purchasing these harmful products. CCE applauds Congressman Israel's efforts to mandate full disclosure and use education as the first step towards protecting the public health and our drinking water supplies." said Adrienne Esposito, Executive Director of Citizens Campaign for the Environment.

Rep. Israel's legislation would require full ingredient labeling on a product or its packaging. Manufacturers would also be required to provide an online list of each product's ingredients. Products covered by the legislation include, but are not limited to: air care products, automotive products, polishes or floor maintenance products, and disinfectants. Ingredients must be listed in descending order of predominance by weight. Cleaning products whose label does not contain a complete and accurate list of all the product's ingredients will be treated as a misbranded hazardous substance under the Federal Hazardous Substances Act.